

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Executive Office of the Mayor

Office on African Affairs

FY16 African Community Grant

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

ELIGIBILITY

- **I have several programs that I am conducting through my non-profit. Should I apply for all of them to receive funding?**
Although there are no restrictions, a focused approach of selecting one or two priority areas that may be inter-connected in your program work would be best.
- **Would OAA consider funding a community radio or website publication?**
Yes - if the applicant meets all the eligibility criteria listed in the RFA.
- **I applied for the FY2015 African Community Grant last year, am I eligible to apply again this year?**
Yes. As of FY2016 though, applicants who have received African Community Grants for three consecutive award cycles are NOT eligible to apply for a period of one fiscal year following their last award.
- **I have a small business that works on workforce development and capacity building. Would we be eligible to apply for this grant?**
Only community- or faith-based organizations with a 501(c)(3) status are eligible to apply. You might consider partnering with such organizations based on mutual interest and programs to apply for the African Community Grant.
- **If our program is for Africans born in the US to learn about Africa or African culture, would we qualify?**
Yes – this grant is designated for community-based African immigrants and first- or second-generation African residents in the District.
- **Do you support or fund emerging businesses and entrepreneurs?**
The African Community Grant is intended to fund community based organizations providing targeted services to the District's African residents and businesses.
- **We are an organization based in Uganda, would we qualify for the grant?**
The African Community Grant is limited to eligible community-based organizations in Washington, DC or to programs serving the District's African immigrant community.
- **What if an organization does not have a 501(c)(3) status, but has a fiscal sponsor that does, can they still apply for MOAA's African Community Grant?**

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The organization that is applying for MOAA's African Community Grant is required to have 501 (c)(3) status in-hand by application deadline.

- **What is the limit or number of organizations that can apply?**
There is no limit to the number of organizations that can apply. OAA will award up to 10 grants in FY16.
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APPLICATION PROCESS & SUBMISSION

- **I am a newly established CBO and have never applied for grants. How shall I go about applying?**
Most new CBOs benefit from collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations with a longer track record and with similar program interests.
- **How shall we submit our proposal?**
Proposals will be submitted electronically and as per the guidelines listed in the RFA. You can submit all the proposal components as one PDF. If you encounter challenges in uploading a large size file in one email, please clearly label the sequence and attachments of emails sent. Not adhering to submission instructions will negatively affect your application consideration. Proposals should be submitted to oaad@dc.gov.
- **How many proposals are accepted from one organization?**
Technically, there is no limit to the number of proposals accepted from one organization – but you may consider combining priority areas and submitting one application for your organization.

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

- **How are the priority areas set?**
The grant priorities are set by the Mayor and reflect her administration's focus of program and service areas designated as important for the economic growth and well-being of District residents.
- **Do you have a quantifiable number in mind when you refer to Africans served in the RFA?**

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If your program serves Africans in DC and meets all other criteria in the RFA, you are eligible to apply.

- **Could we use our own versions of Attachments to submit for the proposal?**
No. In the interest of uniformity, we require that you use the Attachment forms provided for your proposal.
- **Do we need to provide our organization's insurance information?**
No, that will not be necessary at this stage. If you are selected as a grantee, we would require you to submit your organization's insurance information.
- **We are a young organization without a fully formed organizational budget; could we submit balance sheets instead?**
Yes. As listed in your Appendices, your organization's balance sheet could be submitted as part of your proposal.
- **We do not have the CVs of future employees who would be serving in our proposed program, what documents should we submit instead?**
Your organization must designate staff members who will oversee the program and administer funds. Resumes and job descriptions as well as percentage of time spent on the proposed project of existing staff members **working on the proposed program** should be submitted with your proposal. If you are hiring new staff members or intend to work with volunteers on parts of the program, you can submit their projected job descriptions and salary, if applicable in your Staffing Plan (Attachment E).
- **What documents am I required to submit?**
The following documents are required to accompany your FY2015 African Community Grant application:
 1. **Basic Business License from the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs:**
<http://dcra.dc.gov/service/apply-basic-business-license-bbl>
 2. **Exemption Tax Form from the DC Office of Tax Revenue Registration:**
<http://otr.cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/otr/publication/attachments/FR-164%20REV12-12APPLICATIONPACKAGE.pdf>
 3. **Certificate of Clean Hands (Formerly Certificate of Good Standing) from the DC Office of Tax Revenue:**
<http://dcforms.dc.gov/webform/certificate-clean-hands-formerly-certificate-good-standing>

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4. IRS Tax Exempt Affirmation Letter in-hand by FY2015 African Community Grant deadline for submission on October 14, 2014:

<http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Exempt-Organizations-%E2%80%93-Affirmation-Letters>

For sample examples of forms, please see the Pre-bidder Orientation presentation Required Documents.

- **What does Board member affiliations mean?**

As part of your Appendices, we ask that you submit a current Board list with names, affiliation, and contact information. This is used to verify the existence of Board members and ensure that they are affiliated with federally approved institutions.

- **How many fiscal year quarters would we have to conduct our program?**

After the grant is disbursed in the first Quarter (Q1), you will conduct your program and evaluation over the next three Quarters between January 1, 2016 and September 30, 2016.

(Q2: January 1-March 30, 2015 | Q3: April 1st-June 30, 2015 | and Q4: July 1-September 30, 2015).

- **Do indirect costs include wages and consultants that are needed to assist in development of the program?**

MOAA follows principles outlines in the Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions; A-87, Cost Principles for State and Local Governments, and A-122, Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations. These principles specify costs that are allowable, costs allowable only with prior approval, and costs that are unallowable as direct or indirect costs.

Wages and consultant fees needed to assist in the development of the program are considered part of the direct and indirect costs of the program, respectively. Only 15% of the funds can be used for indirect costs. The following are examples of indirect costs that are generally not eligible under the African Community Grant:

- Expenses and costs of organized fundraising, such as fees to promoters, fundraising consultants, etc.

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- Costs of amusements, social activities, and related incidental costs such as meals, beverages, lodgings, rentals, transportation, and gratuities.
- Contributions or donations of grant funds.
- Payment of interest penalties for late payment of bills to contractors.
- Lobbying: Costs associated with activities or any form of communication designed to influence Federal officials or to oppose any legislation or appropriation.
- Contributions to a contingency reserve or similar provision.
- Costs resulting from violations of, or failure to comply with, Federal, District, or other local laws and regulations.

FUNDING

- **Can an organization apply for more than one priority area and if it succeeds, would that organization then be eligible to receive more than \$20,000?**
An organization can apply for more than one priority area but the combined award for any applicant will not exceed \$20,000.
- **Are you required to create a program that is under \$20,000 only for the grant, or can your program budget be higher?**
Your program budget can exceed \$20,000.00 but keep in mind that the highest award given through this grant is \$20,000.00. You would indicate external sources of funding for your program in the application.
- **Do you need to have money on hand to get the \$20,000?**
As part of your organization capacity, reviewers will consider your financial solvency and current operational budget as well as your capacity to manage funds.
- **For organizations collaborating, does that increase the cap in terms of award money, do you get more?**
The maximum that one applicant (collaborating with another or single) can receive is \$20,000 per grant application submitted.
- **When two organizations collaborate are there two sets of grants given to each organization?**
When two organizations collaborate, they will receive one award.

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APPLICATION DETAILS & FORMAT

- **When is the deadline?**
The deadline is Friday, November 20, 2015 at 5pm. Since the proposals are being submitted electronically, your application will have to be in the OAA Inbox before the deadline. You will submit your proposal to: aaa@dc.gov.
- **Will the Pre-bidders Orientation presentation be available?**
The Pre-bidders Orientation presentation is currently available on our website.

PROGRAM SCOPE

- **How are Africans being defined for the purpose of the grant?**
For the purposes of this grant, African-born refers to immigrants or first generation Africans born in the U.S.
- **If we had a pre-existing program would we qualify to apply for the African Community Grant or would we have to propose new programs to be eligible?**
Both a pre-existing program and new programs can be submitted for consideration.
- **If we have a program that is targeted to African constituents outside DC (in the greater DMV) and plan to implement or extend the same program to African residents in DC, would we be eligible to apply?**
Yes, as long as the program you are requesting funds for is targeted to African residents in DC.
- **Part of our program is conducted in Africa, would the funding support programs abroad?**
The African Community Grant will support programs conducted in the District of Columbia for African immigrants or first- and second-generation residents. Program funds cannot be used overseas.
- **Would we be able to pay for volunteer food and drinks from the program budget?**
No. The District Government does not allocate funds for expenses related to food. Please be aware that expenses related to food cannot be submitted in your final reports for reimbursement.
- **Does the African Community Grant fund transportation costs?**
Yes, if it is itemized as a program cost.

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- **Can I integrate two funding priority areas in one proposal?**
Yes.
- **Are there limits or specifications to what programs are funded?**
Yes. The scope of programs funded under the African Community Grant should align with the Mayor's policy priorities and is detailed in the Request for Application.
- **If an organization has several projects, when applying, should they focus on the one project which requires more funding, or showcase the various projects the organization offers in order to show its breadth?**
How applicants compose their proposals is entirely up to them but a focus on funding priority areas will strengthen applications.

EVALUATION & REVIEW

- **What is the review process like?**
The review process is detailed in the RFA - MOAA recruits neutral individuals with background in the various grant priority areas to serve as reviewers. Reviewers will read proposals assigned to them and score them according to criteria detailed in the RFA. They will then submit their evaluations as recommendations to MOAA. Please refer to p.5 of the RFA for more details.
- **Would OAA be able to facilitate collaboration between organizations to partner for this grant?**
Generally, OAA encourages and fosters collaboration between organizations through their core program activities and events. Organizations are encouraged to make use of OAA networking opportunities to identify partners and initiate joint programs that they can submit for the FY2015 African Community Grant.
- **How does it work when you collaborate with another organization?**
Collaborations take different forms and it mostly depends on the particular arrangements of organizations. The lead organization identified in the proposal would serve as a fiscal agent and administer program funds – in which case the lead organization would provide all required documentation. Your Staffing Plan (Attachment E) and Work Plan (Attachment F) will indicate the various roles and responsibilities assigned to staff members in the two organizations. The lead organization often retains a percentage of the grant for administrative costs related to managing the program.
- **Would applicants from FY2015 receive favorable consideration if they apply again?**

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No. Applicants from 2015 are eligible to apply again but would receive the same consideration as new applicants for the African Community Grant.

- **What is the measure of Africans served in a program?** T
The measure of Africans served is the number of Africans that are reached/served/or benefit from proposed programing.
- **Are the evaluation criteria tied to specific grant amounts? Are there different criteria to qualify for higher amounts of funding?**
The evaluating criteria are the same across the grant. The award amount depends on the nature and cost of the program, the amount requested, and the Reviewers' recommendations for each application.
- **What type of details does the review committee wish to see the organizational and program charts?**
The scoring criteria in the RFA (Section G p.10) detail what the reviewers will be evaluating your proposal on. The organizational chart would show the standard structure of the organizations, the positions, titles and hierarchical relations. This would be part of the Appendices list required for you to fulfill as part of your applications. An incomplete application will not be forwarded to reviewers.
- **If an organization only has volunteers does it help your cause?**
Grant reviewers will use different mechanisms to gauge your organization's capacity, its structure, and financial stability. Management and organization history will be a part of that evaluation.
- **What type of details does the review committee wish to see the organizational and program charts?**
The scoring criteria in the RFA (Section G p.10) detail what the reviewers will be evaluating your proposal on. The organizational chart would show the standard structure of the organizations, the positions, titles and hierarchical relations. This would be part of the Appendices list required for you to fulfill as part of your applications. An incomplete application will not be forwarded to reviewers.

GRANT HISTORY

- **How many people received grants last year?**
Eight community-based organizations were awarded the African Community Grant last year. More details on the organizations and their priority program areas are available at our Post-Award Press Release [here](#).
- **Would past proposals be available for viewing?**

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Past proposals are not currently available. Details on grantee profiles, program outcomes and monitoring are part of the public domain in our Community Grant Annual Reports.

- **Is there potential for continued funding opportunities from MOAA after September 30, 2016?**

This is a single-year and not a multiple-year grant so the RFA would only be referring to FY16 which will end on September 30. We do not currently have information on whether or not a similar grant will be available for FY17.

- **Would OAA give recommendations where awardees can seek funding for continuation of program?**

The DC Office of Partnerships and Grant Services (OPGS) produces *The Funding Alert*, a weekly electronic bulletin that highlights current and competitive grant opportunities – for eligible community, faith-based, and 501 (c) (3) nonprofits organizations – available from District, federal, and foundation grant-making entities. Sign-up and receive more information at: <http://opgs.dc.gov/page/funding-alert>.

RESOURCES

- **Being a start-up NGO on education, getting funding is hard. Do you have any tips?**

The DC Office of Partnerships and Grants (OPGS) provides capacity-building training and technical assistance to District of Columbia agencies, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporations, as well as community and faith-based organizations. OPGS has a special interest in servicing District based emerging nonprofits whose programs are often overlooked by mainstream funders in order enhance their leadership and organizational capacity to better compete for and manage grant related program services. You can learn more about their services and make an appointment to receive one-on-one advice at: opgs.dc.gov

- **Where is OPGS located, and how do we access it?**

One Judiciary Square | 441 4th Street, NW, 707 North | Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 727-8900